

B-4451

1641-59 NORTH AVENUE

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

An excellent example of a three-story Swell Front row situated on a prominent thoroughfare.

Constructed circa 1889, the row has a combination of flat-fronted and rounded bays and conical corner turrets. Private access.

MD INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES FORM  
SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER SURVEY

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name N/A

other names/site number rowhouses/ B-4451 (preferred)

2. Location

street & number 1641-59 North Ave.

not for publication

city or town Baltimore

vicinity N/A

state Maryland

code MD

county Baltimore City

code 510

zip code 21217

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

N/A

4. National Park Service Certification

N/A

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

Noncontributing

10

buildings

sites

structures

objects

Total

10

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
(1641-59 North Ave.)  
(Baltimore City, MD)

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC

Sub: multiple dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC

Sub: multiple dwelling

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation marble

roof

walls BRICK

other marble, WOOD

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance See continuation sheet.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development

SDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
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Period of Significance c. 1889-1940

Significant Dates c. 1889

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Joseph H. Pentz, builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

#### 9. Major Bibliographical References

##### Maps

Bromley, G.W. and Co. Atlas of the City of Baltimore, Vol. 1. Philadelphia: 1885, 1896.  
Hopkins, G.M. Map of the City of Baltimore, Maryland. 1876, 1877.  
Sanborn Map Company. Insurance Maps, Baltimore, Maryland, Vols. 2,3, and 7. New York: 1890, 1901, 1914, 1928.  
Simmons, Isaac. 1852 Revision of the Thomas H. Poppleton Map. Baltimore: 1852.

Baltimore City Directories

Baltimore City Land Records

#### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Lot = 15' x 80'

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UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone Easting	North	ing	Zone Easting	North	ing
1	—	—	—	3	—	—
2	—	—	—	4	—	—

— See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Block 5, Lots 1-10

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are based on a city lot(s) retaining original property lines.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Jo Lampl & Kay Fanning/Architectural Historians  
organization Robinson & Associates date July 1992  
street & number 1710 Connecticut Ave., NW telephone (202) 234-2333  
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20009

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name multiple owners  
street&number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Baltimore state MD zip code 21217

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 5 & 6 Page 1

1641-59 North Avenue  
name of property  
Baltimore City, Maryland  
county and State

HISTORIC CONTEXT

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s): Industrial/Urban Dominance

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture, Landscape  
Architecture, and Community Planning; Social/Education/Cultural

Resource Type:

Category: building(s)

Historic Environment: urban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): domestic

Known Design Source: Joseph H. Pentz, builder

NPS Form 10-900-a  
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7      Page 1

1641-59 North Ave.  
**name of property**  
Baltimore City, Maryland  
**county and State**

DESCRIPTION

This substantial block is an excellent example of an elegant Swell Front row situated on a prominent thoroughfare. The combination of flat-fronted and rounded bays, and the use of conical corner turrets, make these three-story, three-bay rowhouses an unusually strong example of the form.

Built of iron-spot brick, the houses have contrasting trim of rough-faced stone which is used for the foundations and beltcourses at the sill and lintel level of each story. The windows are one-over-one double-hung sash, with those on the first floor somewhat taller than the others. Doors are single-leaf with transoms. The cornice is corbelled brick carrying a wooden architrave molding above. The roof is flat. The corner turrets have slate shingles with a decorative polychromatic slate band.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

1641-59 North Ave.  
**name of property**  
Baltimore City, Maryland  
**county and State**SIGNIFICANCE

Joseph H. Pentz built these fine rowhouses just after the street was annexed to the city proper in 1888. One year later, on March 1, 1889, Charles E. Spalding and his wife Virginia leased the land to Joseph H. Pentz. (Liber J.B. 1663, Folio 513.)

In the 1889 City Directory, Spalding is listed as a bookkeeper with an office at 567 Dolphin Street. Given the somewhat clerical nature of this profession, this may or may not be the same Charles E. Spalding whose name appears widely in the block indexes for the late 19th-century years in connection with numerous real estate transactions in the survey area. It is undoubtedly the same C.E. Spalding who is listed as a director of the Old Line Real Estate and Trust Company (see B-4456), a firm which dealt heavily in real estate transactions in the area around North Avenue.

The same 1889 City Directory lists Joseph H. Pentz as a clerk at 537 Columbia Avenue. Perhaps Pentz was at the point of making a career change (from clerk to builder), as the 1926 City Directory lists a bold entry for the "Joseph H. Pentz Company, Mortgage Loans and Real Estate," with offices at 1508 Citizens National Bank Building. It is possible, therefore, that this fine block on North Avenue represents the early work of Joseph H. Pentz, who would go on to establish his own company.

In 1890, this block of North Avenue witnessed the first successful electric streetcar in America make its inaugural trip. In 1900, the block was all residential, but by 1930, the row had been transformed from an all-residential block to a mixed-use residential/commercial block. Interestingly, in 1930, there were a number of building and loan associations which leased space in this particular building:

- 1641: Gt. A & P Tea Co.  
Reuben Hecht
- 1643: Joseph N. Bagwell, dentist
- 1645: Mrs. Bertha Benesch
- 1647: David K. Baum
- 1649: Woodlawn Heights Building & Loan Association  
Modern Building & Loan Association



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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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1641-59 North Ave.  
**name of property**  
Baltimore City, Maryland  
**county and State**

1930 Occupants (continued)

Urban & Suburban Permanent Building Association  
Harding Building & Loan Association  
1651: North Avenue Permanent Building & Loan Association  
Lafayette Perpetual Building & Loan Association  
Leo A. Wiley  
1653: Theresa Boechner, music teacher  
1655: Mrs. Ida B. Burton  
1657: Martin J. Brandmiller  
1659: Caleb Dorsey, dentist

SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER/PENN-NORTH  
RECONNAISSANCE-LEVEL SURVEY FORM

Survey No. B-4451

Neg. No. 8/10

Historic Name \_\_\_\_\_

Current Name/Use \_\_\_\_\_

Address(es) 1641-59 North Avenue

Resource/Property Type

- ☒ Rowhouses  
☐ Commercial Structure  
☐ Public/Institutional Building  
☐ Public Housing  
☐ Site  
☐ Other

☒ Attached  
☐ Freestanding

Note: \_\_\_\_\_

Stories 3 + B

Primary Material iron-spot brick Secondary Material marble, wood

Roof Form flat; conical turrets

No. of Bays in Unit/Facade 3 If Rowhouse: ☐ Flat Front ☒ Swell Front ☐ Porch

Window Type: ☒ Double-Hung ☒ 1/1 Sash ☐ 2/2 Sash ☐ 2/1 Sash ☐ Other Sash ☐ Transom  
Door Type: ☒ Single-Leaf ☐ Double-Leaf ☐ Number of panels (if visible) ☒ Transom

Architectural Style "Swell Front"/Romanesque Revival Date c. 1890-1901

**Summary/Noteworthy Features:** Excellent example of an elegant Swell Front row on a prominent thoroughfare (North Avenue). The combination of flat-fronted and rounded bays, and the use of conical corner turrets make this row a strong example of its form. Entire block bounded by round end units with conical roofs. Facades between are 3-bay, with projecting 2-bay sections that alternate rounded and flat facades. Corbelled brick and wood architrave cornice. Stone beltcourses act as lintels and sills for windows, doors.

Alterations: ☐ Formstone ☐ Stucco  
☐ Vinyl/Aluminum ☒ Window/Door Changes  
☐ Awnings ☐ Missing Cornice Elements  
☐ First-Floor Use Change ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Status: ☐ Occupied ☐ Vacant ☒ Mixed  
NR Evaluation: ☒ Contributing ☐ Non-Contributing  
Recommended for Intensive Level: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Surveyor: Joey Lampl  
Date: February-April 1992

Affiliation: Robinson & Associates



W. NORTH

AV.

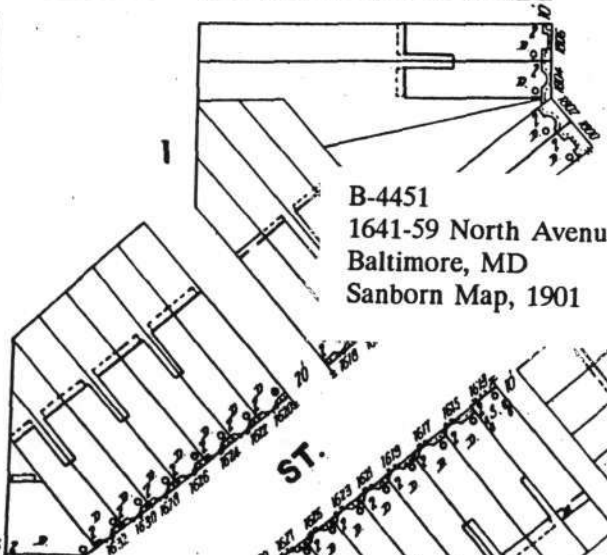
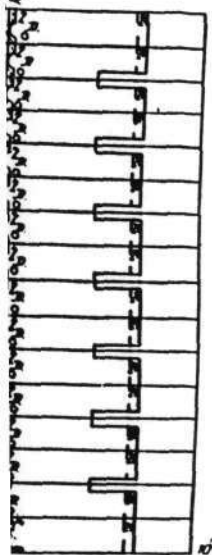
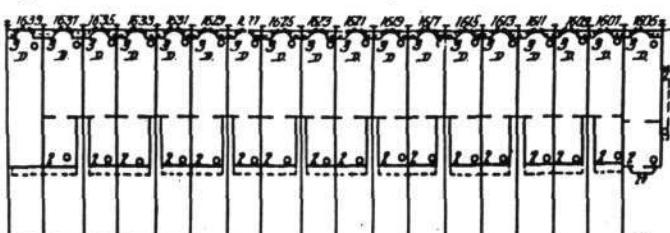
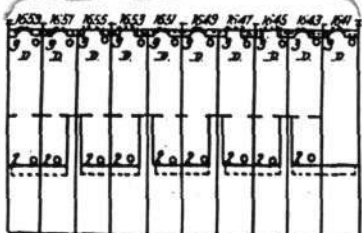
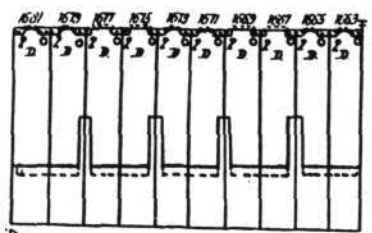
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30" W PIPE

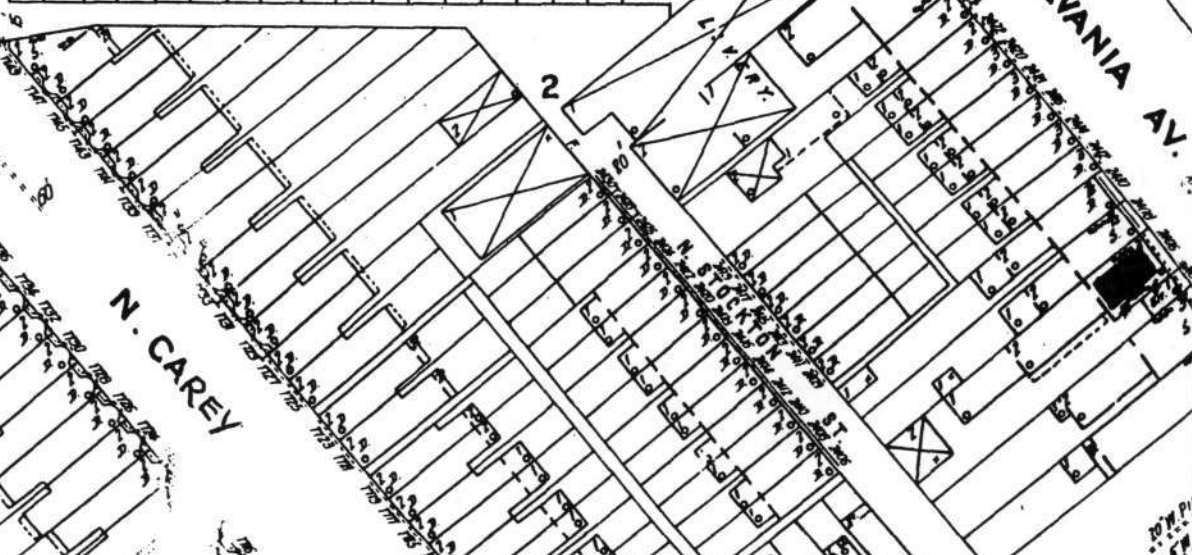
12" W PIPE

20" W PIPE

6" W PIPE



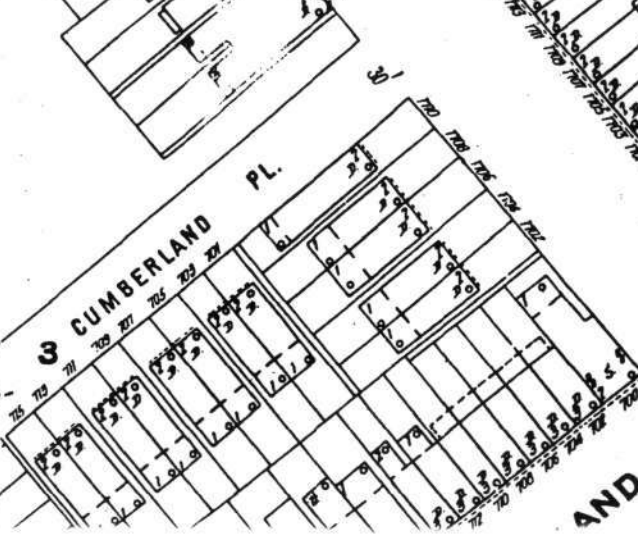
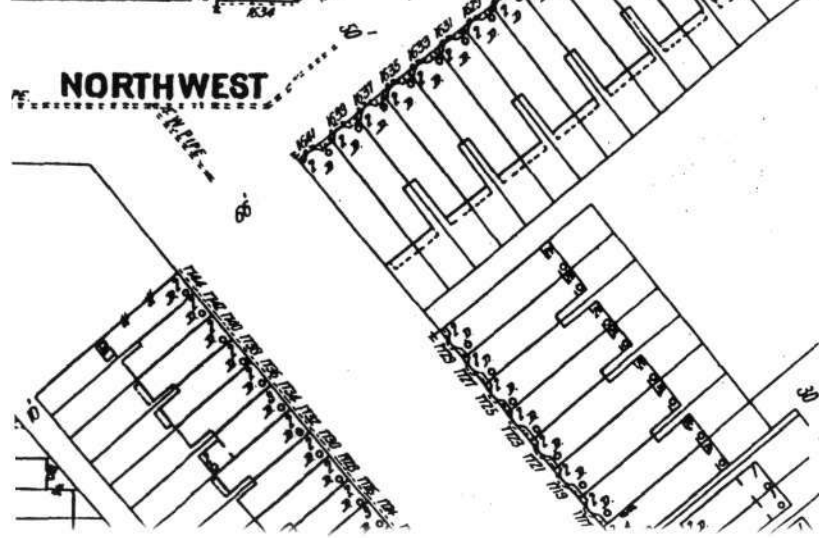
B-4451  
1641-59 North Avenue  
Baltimore, MD  
Sanborn Map, 1901



N. CAREY

ST.

NORTHWEST



CUMBERLAND

PL.

AND

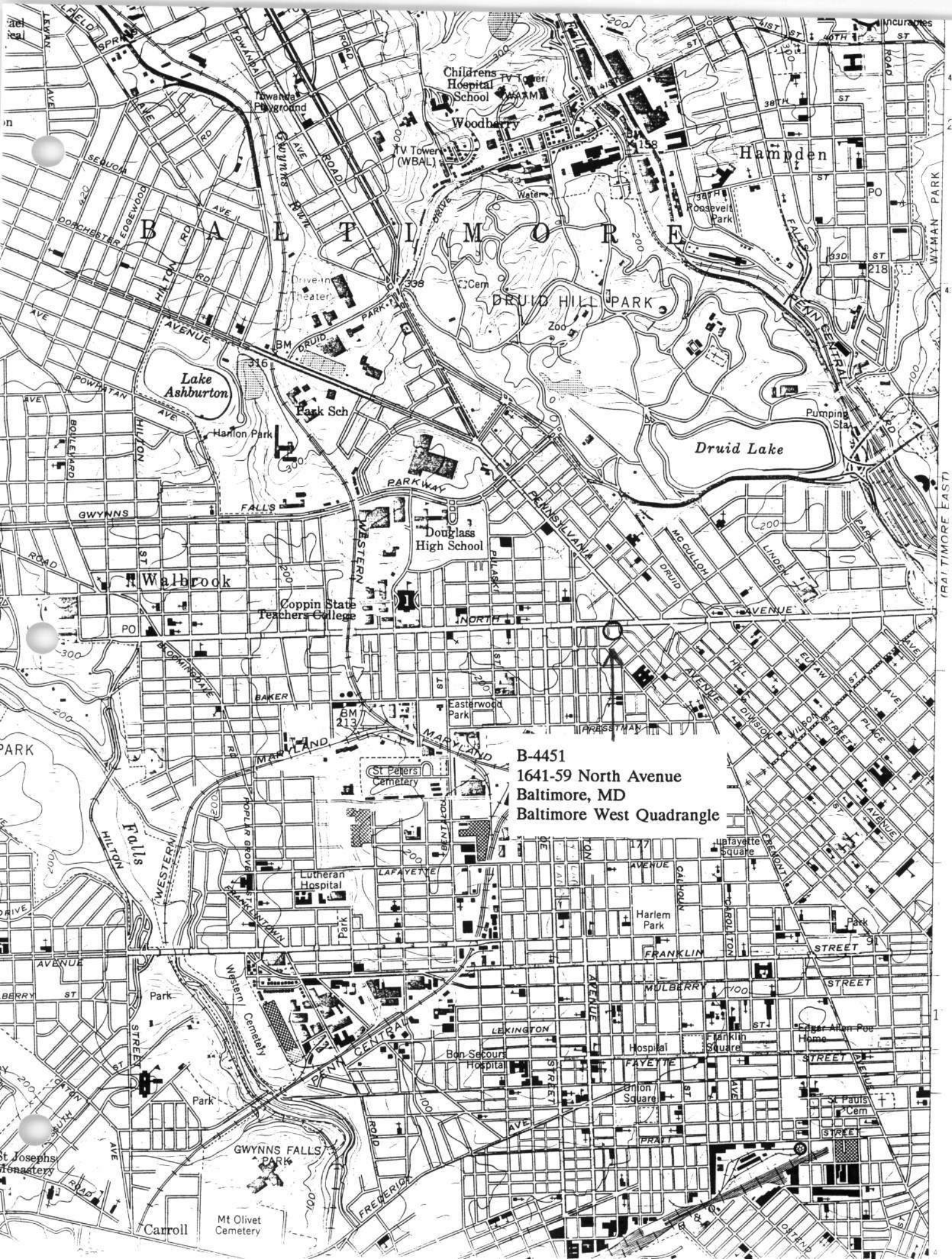
6" W PIPE

20" W PIPE

6" W PIPE

N





B- 4451

1659

1641





SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER/PENN-NORTH

#B-4451

BALTIMORE, MD

ELIZABETH GO LAMPL

MARCH 1992

CITY OF BALTIMORE, COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

1641-59 NORTH AVENUE

NORTH ELEVATION

ROLL 8/NEG 10

1 of 2





Sandtown-Winchester / Penn. North  
#B-4451  
Baltimore, MD

Leonard Jackson  
July 1992

City of Baltimore, Commission for Historical and Architectural  
Preservation

1641-59 North Avenue  
VIEW FACING WEST

Roll 10/Neg 12

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